CHAPTER XXVI.

And now it came to pass in the commencement of the thirtieth year of the reign of the Judges, in the second day, on the first month, Moroni received an epistle from Helaman, stating the affairs of the people in that quarter of the land. And these are the words which he wrote, saying: My dearly beloved brother, Moroni, as well in the Lord as in the tribulations of our warfare; behold, my beloved brother, I have somewhat to tell you concerning our warfare in this part of the land. Behold, two thousand of the sons of those men which Ammon brought down out of the land of Nephi: Now ye have known that these were a descendant of Laman, which was the eldest son of our father Lehi. Now I need not rehearse unto you concerning their traditions or their unbelief, for thou knowest concerning all these things; therefore it supposeth me that I tell you that two thousand of these young men hath taken their weapons of war, and would that I should be their leader; and we have come forth to defend our country. And now ye also know concerning the covenant which their fathers made, that they would not take up their weapons of war against their brethren, to shed blood. But in the twenty and sixth year, when they saw our afflictions and our tribulations for them, they were about to break the covenant which they had made, and take up their weapons of war in our defence. But I would not suffer them that they should break this covenant which they had made, supposing that God would strengthen us, insomuch that we should not suffer more because of the fulfilling the oath which they had taken. But behold, here is one thing in which we may have great joy. For behold, in the twenty and sixth year, I Helaman, did march at the head of these two thousand young men, to the city of Judea, to assist Antipus, whom ye had appointed a leader over the people of that part of the land. And I did join my two thousand sons, (for they are worthy to be called sons,) to the army of Antipus; in the which strength Antipus did rejoice exceedingly; for behold, his army had been reduced by the Lamanites because of the numerority of their forces having slain a vast number of our men; for which cause we have to mourn. Nevertheless, we may console ourselves in this point: that they have died in the cause of their country and of their God; yea, and they are happy. And the Lamanites had also retained many prisoners, all of whom are Chief Captains; for none other have they spared alive. And we suppose that they are now at this time in the land of Nephi; it is so if they are not slain. And now these are the cities which the Lamanites have obtained possession, by the shedding of the blood of so many of our valiant men: The land of Manti, or the city of Manti, and the city of Zeezrom, and the city of Cumeni, and the city of Antiparah. And these are the cities which they possessed when I arrived at the city of Judea; and I found Antipus and his men toiling with their mights to fortify the city; yea, and they were depressed in body as well as in spirit; for they had fought valiantly by day, and toiled by night, to maintain their cities; and thus they had suffered great afflictions of every kind. And now they were determined to conquer in this place, or die; therefore you may well suppose that this little force which I brought with me; yea, those sons of mine, gave them great hopes and much joy.

And now it came to pass that when the Lamanites saw that Antipus had received a greater strength to his army, they were compelled, by the orders of Ammoron, to not come against the city of Judea, or against us, to battle. And thus were we favored of the Lord: for had they come upon us in this our weakness, they might have perhaps destroyed our little army; but thus were we preserved. They were commanded by Ammoron to maintain those cities which they had taken. And thus ended the twenty and sixth year. And in the commencement of the twenty and seventh year, we had prepared our city and ourselves for defence. Now we were desirous that the Lamanites should come upon us; for we were not desirous to make an attack upon them in their strong holds. And it came to pass that we kept spies out round about, to watch the movements of the Lamanites, that they might not pass us by night, nor by day, to make an attack upon our other cities, which were on the northward; for we knew in those cities they were not sufficiently strong to meet them; therefore we were desirous, if they should pass by us, to fall upon them in their rear, and thus bring them up in the rear, at the same time they were met in the front. We supposed that we could overpower them; but behold, we were disappointed in this our desire. They durst not pass by us with their whole army; neither durst they with a part, lest they should not be sufficiently strong, and they should fall. Neither durst they march down against the city of Zarahemla; neither durst they cross the head of Sidon, over to the city of Nephihah.. And thus, with